

## **WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**COMMITTEE: REAL PROPERTY TAX SERVICES**

**DATE: May 31, 2007**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: OTHERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS	BELDEN	MICHAEL SWAN, DIRECTOR, REAL PROPERTY TAX
	MONROE	SERVICES
	CHAMPAGNE	PATRICIA NENNINGER, SECOND ASSISTANT COUNTY
	HASKELL	ATTORNEY
	BENTLEY	HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE &
	F. THOMAS	FISCAL SERVICES
	GERAGHTY	JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
		CHAIRMAN THOMAS
		SUPERVISOR GABRIELS
		FRANCIS O' KEEFE, TREASURER
		FRED FISK, ACCLAIM PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
		JOHN SALVADOR, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY
		CHARLENE DiRESTA, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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Mr. Belden called the meeting of the Real Property Tax Services Committee to order at 10:19 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Michael Swan, Director of Real Property Tax Services, who distributed copies of his agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Swan apprised that Item No. 1 on the Agenda was the Corlew Property at 26 Boulevard in Queensbury. He added that the parcel had not yet gone out for bid; however, he said, there was currently someone interested in purchasing the property. He questioned the Committee if the property could be sold outright, without going out for bid. He added that this had been done in the past, as long as the sale price was at or above the appraised value of the property.

Mr. Belden questioned the legality of the County selling the property without preparing a Request for Proposal. Patricia Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney, apprised that the property, which was obtained through a tax

foreclosure proceeding, could be sold as a result of a sealed bid or as a result of a negotiation after an appraisal. Mr. Haskell recommended proceeding in the quickest manner possible in order to sell the property.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell and seconded by Mr. Bentley to authorize an appraisal of the Corlew Property and to allow Acclaim Property Management, LLC to submit a bid to the County Treasurer.

Fred Fisk, Acclaim Property Management, introduced himself and distributed a fact sheet on 26 Boulevard in Queensbury, *a copy of which is on file with the minutes*. He apprised that 26 Boulevard was physically connected to 24 Boulevard, which was currently under contract to Acclaim Property Management, LLC. He added that the building was in poor shape, with both the interior and the exterior full of debris, and had been boarded up for public safety reasons. He apprised that the County was not currently collecting taxes on the property. He added that he planned to put a new facade on the building, as well as renovate the interior. He further added that the property would then be able to be put back on the tax rolls.

Mr. Belden stated that Acclaim should be allowed to submit their bid to the Treasurer's Office. Mr. Champagne apprised that the County should first put out a Request for Proposal. Mr. Belden stated that the County should have the property appraised and then accept Mr. Fisk's offer, as long as it was more than the appraised value.

After a brief discussion Mr. Belden called the question and the motion carried by majority vote to have the Corlew Property appraised and to allow Acclaim Property Management, LLC to submit a bid to the County Treasurer, with Mr. Champagne voting in opposition. *The necessary resolution was authorized for the June 15, 2007 Board meeting.*

Mr. Fisk questioned who he should contact to find out the appraised value of the property. Mr. Belden replied that Mr. Fisk should submit his offer for the property to the Treasurer and the County would have the property appraised. Mr. Swan questioned if they would be able to have a resolution for the sale of the property by the next Board meeting on June 15, 2007. Mrs. Nenninger apprised that they could have a special meeting before the Board meeting to authorize the resolution.

Mr. Fisk and Mr. O' Keefe exited the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

Mr. Swan apprised that Item No. 2 on the Agenda was a discussion on the four properties that may qualify for Brownsfield grant funding. He added that the

properties were the Sawyer Property in the Town of Hague, the Eastman Property in the Town of Chester, the Mosher Property in the Town of Johnsburg and the Mullen Property in the Town of Queensbury.

Mr. Geraghty questioned how a property could be so delinquent in their property taxes and still continue to operate a business and be making money. He added that it was not fair to County residents that were paying their taxes if the County did not foreclose on these properties.

Mr. Haskell suggested that Chairman Thomas draft a letter to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) asking them to make a determination of the status of these four properties, as they pertain to the Brownsfield Grant.

Mr. Monroe commented that the back taxes on all four properties totaled approximately a quarter of a million dollars and added that he did not feel that this situation could be allowed to continue.

In answer to a question of why the County had not foreclosed on these properties yet, Mrs. Nenninger replied that if the County foreclosed on the properties and took title, and if there was environmental issues, the County would be responsible for the clean-up.

Mr. Champagne questioned why the Mullen Property had been assessed for zero dollars in 1997 and 1999 for interest and penalties and Mr. Swan replied that was a question for the Treasurer's Office. Mr. Champagne noted that the full value of the property was \$290,000. In a question as to the status of the parcels, Mrs. Nenninger stated that the Mullen Property, as discussed by Mr. Dusek at last month's Committee meeting, was in the current foreclosure and the County would make a motion, similar to the procedure used in Warrensburg under the Brownsfield grant, to undertake an environmental audit of the property. Mr. Swan apprised that the idea was to take one of the properties and try it first.

Mr. Swan, in response to a question, stated that he had in the past contacted the DEC regarding properties which the County had not foreclosed against due to environmental concerns, and no action that he was aware of had occurred. Mr. Monroe stated that he would like a letter to go to DEC from the County requesting that these properties should be reviewed in accordance with the environmental laws.

Mr. Belden stated that he agreed with Mr. Monroe, that a letter should be sent to

NYS DEC and added that he felt a letter should also be sent to Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Payne suggested that rather than have Chairman Thomas draft a letter to the NYS DEC, a letter should be drafted to Senator Elizabeth Little and Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried unanimously to authorize Chairman Thomas to draft a letter to Senator Little and Assemblywoman Sayward regarding the DEC making a determination on environmental status of these four properties.

Discussion ensued.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Belden called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to authorize Chairman Thomas to draft a letter to Senator Little and Assemblywoman Sayward and a copy to DEC, with the letter to be reviewed by the County Attorney, as outlined above.

Mr. Swan apprised that Item No. 3 on the Agenda was a request for permission to purchase a replacement plotter. He added that the current plotter was used to print all the tax maps and was at the end of its usefulness. He stated that he had obtained a price quote from Information Technology and a new plotter would cost approximately \$9,800. He added that if he was authorized to make the purchase, he would be requesting a transfer of funds at the next meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried by majority vote to authorize the purchase of a new plotter, as outlined above, with Mr. Belden voting in opposition.

John Salvador introduced himself to the Committee and praised Mr. Swan for his work on the tax maps. Mr. Salvador stated that a specific area in the lake had been incorrect on the maps for a long period of time. He stated that the shoreline is not shown correctly on the tax maps and should be re-mapped. He added that this was because the high water mark was not the same as the legal location of the town line boundary between Bolton and Queensbury. Mr. Salvador suggested that this issue affects the area which is comprised of portions of both Fort Ann

and Queensbury, which Mr. Salvador said should be deemed a separate village and recommended that it be named East Lake George.

Mr. Belden stated that the meeting was running over on time; however, he thanked Mr. Salvador for his comments.

As there was no further business to come before the Real Property Tax Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. Haskell, Mr. Belden adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene DiResta, Legislative Office Specialist